

Monday, 27 February 2017

New Zealand's 'Housing Crisis' dominates domestic issues as PM Bill English announces New Zealand Election for September 23, 2017

A recent Roy Morgan survey on the 'Most Important Problems facing New Zealand' showed Government/ Public Policy/ Housing issues 41% (up 1% since October 2016) are clearly the most important set of problems facing New Zealand according to a representative cross-sample of 1,000 New Zealanders interviewed in January 2017.

Dominating these concerns are the Housing-related issues of Housing affordability/ Increasing house prices (15%) and Housing shortage/ Homeless/ Homelessness (11%) – mentioned unprompted by a total of 26% of New Zealanders as the biggest problem facing New Zealand.

Prime Minister Bill English has announced the New Zealand Election will be held on Saturday September 23 – almost three years to the day since former Prime Minister John Key led National to its last election victory. Today's survey results show that if English is to secure an election victory later this year he will have to convince New Zealanders he has worthwhile policy solutions to the 'Housing Crisis' facing more than a quarter of the New Zealand electorate.

Analysis of the Impact of New Zealand's 'Housing Crisis'

By Gender

- **Women: (27%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (14%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (13%);
- **Men: (25%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (17%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (8%).

By Age

- **18-24: (26%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (17%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (9%);
- **25-34: (25%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (15%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (10%);
- **35-49: (29%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (18%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (11%);
- **50+: (26%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (13%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (13%).

By Location

- **Auckland: (32%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (20%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (12%);
- **Wellington: (20%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (15%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (5%);
- **Other Northern: (23%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (12%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (11%);
- **Canterbury: (22%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (13%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (9%);
- **Other Southern: (28%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (13%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (15%).

By Political Affiliation

- **National: (26%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (15%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (11%);
- **Labour: (35%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (20%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (15%);
- **Greens: (11%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (8%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (3%);
- **NZ First: (15%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (15%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (0%);
- **Other*: (22%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (17%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (5%).

**Other includes Maori Party, Act NZ, United Future, Internet Party, Mana Party, Conservative Party of New Zealand and Other.*

By Employment Status

- **Employed FT: (26%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (17%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (9%);
- **Employed PT: (25%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (13%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (12%);
- **Retired: (24%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (7%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (17%);
- **Other*: (28%)** – House prices/ Housing affordability (18%); Housing shortage/ Homeless (10%).

**Other includes – Looking for full-time or part-time work, Students, Non-Workers and Home duties.*

Comments made by New Zealanders about New Zealand's 'Housing crisis'

Of those who mentioned "House prices and Housing affordability"

"The cost of housing going up due to the demand from offshore buyers around the world."

"Immigration. People are really struggling to get their foot in door for housing"

"Housing and Immigration – cost and Immigration of older people."

"Rising house prices."

"The house prices, a lot of people can't afford to buy a house."

"The housing crisis, like the housing prices in Auckland."

"The increasing cost of housing is out of control and not sustainable and it will crash."

"Mainly housing issues like the extremely high prices in Auckland."

"Housing – the price of renting is killing people."

"Rental prices have gone sky high."

"An overheated property market."

"Housing. It's just too expensive to buy or rent."

"Property prices because it's an unsustainable economic situation."

"Can't afford housing – especially new owners."

"The increasing costs of housing, It's out of control."

"Housing for first time owners."

"Housing prices – it's too expensive for first home buyers to get into the housing market."

"The price of housing and the inability of the average New Zealander to afford a house."

"It's expensive and overpriced real estate and people can't afford housing."

Of those who mentioned the "Housing shortage/ Homeless/ Homelessness"

"Housing crisis."

"Homeless people and poverty."

"Housing and jobs – there's a lot of people that have no housing and can't afford housing."

"The increasing house prices and the rising number of homeless."

"Housing and jobs. Need more of both created in order for things to become more affordable."

"Homeless people and inequality."

"Homelessness, especially among younger people."

"Lack of housing availability."

"Homelessness and poverty – the number of families living in poverty has been increasing."

"Homelessness. When people are begging on the streets it gives a different perspective of your city."

"Lack of housing, homelessness increases and more people end up in poverty."

"Housing and the poor management of demand and supply."

"Housing crisis. People want to live here I guess."

"Homelessness. People sleeping in cars and garages and on the streets."

"The homeless – there really needs to be something done about it like boarding houses."

"Housing – there's a shortage of affordable housing which is creating homelessness."

"The accessibility to housing in New Zealand is poor. It's very difficult for people to own a home in New Zealand due to the high prices."

"There's a growing lack of affordable housing in New Zealand."

"The lack of affordable housing in New Zealand is in turn creating an increase in homelessness."

"Lack of housing for people."

Michele Levine, Chief Executive Officer, Roy Morgan says:

*"New Zealand's 'Housing Crisis' – mentioned by 26% of New Zealanders 15% (Housing affordability/ Increasing house prices) and 11% (Housing shortage/ Homelessness) as the biggest problems facing **New Zealand** in January is the key issue for New Zealand electors heading towards this year's election.*

"Newly installed New Zealand Prime Minister Bill English announced in late January that New Zealand's election would be held on Saturday September 23, 2017 – almost exactly three years to the day since former Prime Minister John Key won the 2014 New Zealand Election.

*"In addition the recent [Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey: 2017](#) named **New Zealand's largest city of Auckland (population of 1.5 million) as the world's fourth least affordable major housing market** behind Hong Kong, Sydney and Vancouver. A staggering 32% of Auckland residents mentioned either Housing affordability/ Increasing house prices (20%) or Housing shortage/ Homelessness (12%) as the biggest problems facing **New Zealand – clearly higher than any other city or region of New Zealand.***

*"Incredibly, New Zealand PM Bill English should know all about the Demographia Survey as now PM English is quoted in the opening notes to the paper saying: **'It costs too long much and takes too long to build a house in New Zealand. Land has been made artificially scarce by regulation that locks up land for development. This regulation has made land supply unresponsive to demand'**.*

"The 'Housing Crisis' resonates across all age groups: 18-24 (26%); 25-34 (25%); 35-49 (29%) and 50+ (26%) and both genders: Women (27%) cf. men (25%). Perhaps most importantly for a Government seeking re-election, the analysis shows over a quarter of National supporters (26%) and over a third of Labour supporters (35%) consider the 'Housing Crisis' New Zealand's biggest problem while interestingly this opinion is shared by only 15% of New Zealand First supporters and just 11% of Greens supporters.

"Given his remarks to the Demographia Survey at least New Zealand electors know that their Prime Minister knows about the problem – but will he be able to come up with policy solutions this year that show he is serious about tackling the problem? One thing is certain, if English fails to do so the Opposition parties including Labour, the Greens and New Zealand First will reap the rewards at this year's election and possibly form Government."

These findings come from a special New Zealand Roy Morgan survey conducted with New Zealanders aged 14+ asked what are the most important issues facing **New Zealand** and the **World** today.

In New Zealand, a cross-section of 1,000 men and women aged 14 or over were interviewed by telephone in January 2017. Respondents were asked: "Firstly, what do you think is the most important problem facing the **World** today?" and "What do you think is the most important problem facing **New Zealand** today?" The research conducted was both **qualitative** (in that people were asked to use their own words) and **quantitative** (in that the 'open-ended' responses were analysed and 'coded' so that the results could be counted and reported as percentages).

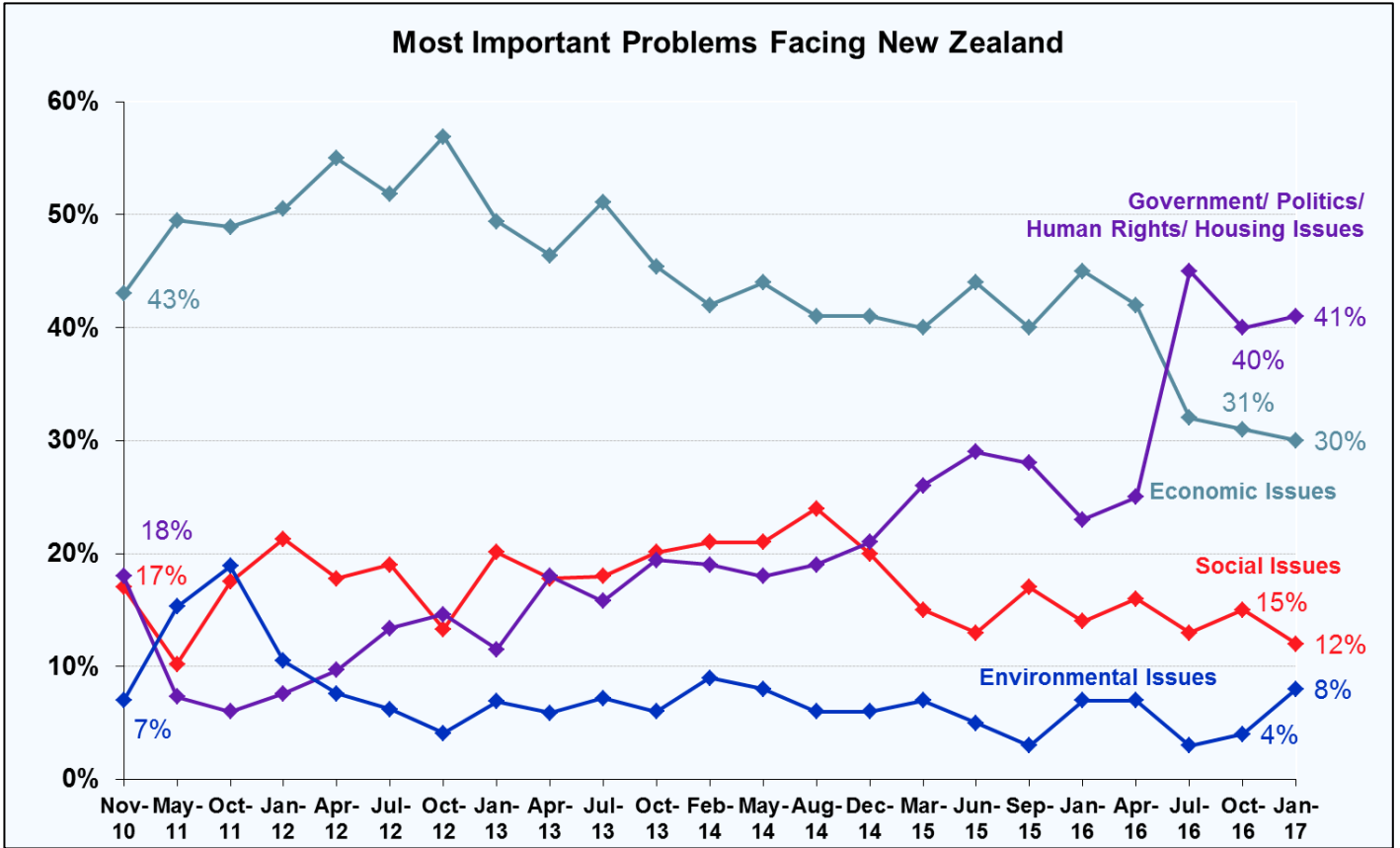
Most Important Problem Facing New Zealand

| | New Zealand | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Jun 2015 % | Sep 2015 % | Jan 2016 % | Apr 2016 % | Jul 2016 % | Oct 2016 % | Jan 2017 % |
| Increasing house prices/ Housing affordability | 11 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 17 | 17 | 15 |
| Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage | 3 | * | 3 | 2 | 12 | 10 | 11 |
| SUB-TOTAL HOUSING RELATED | 14 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 29 | 27 | 26 |
| Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government Spending | 8 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Immigration/ Refugees | 2 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| Education | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Health Issues/ Disease/ Obesity/ Poor Health | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | * | 1 |
| Health System/ Shortage of Doctors/ Health Services | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Benefits Given to the Maori/ Inequality Between Maori and Other Ethnic Groups | 1 | * | * | 1 | * | 1 | 1 |
| Not enough people/ People leaving New Zealand | 1 | 1 | - | * | * | * | * |
| TOTAL GOVERNMENT/ PUBLIC POLICY/ HOUSING/ HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES | 29 | 28 | 23 | 25 | 45 | 40 | 41 |
| Poverty/ The Gap Between Rich & Poor/ Imbalance of Wealth | 21 | 14 | 22 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| Economy/ Financial Crisis/ Recession/ Exchange Rate/ High Dollar | 10 | 15 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Cost of Living/ Inflation/ Financial Hardship/ Household Debt | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Unemployment/ Job Security | 5 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| Foreign Ownership/ Selling our Assets | 1 | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Low Wages | 1 | * | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Need to Increase Exports | 1 | * | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Quake Recovery & Rebuilding – Christchurch, South Island, Wellington etc. | * | * | - | * | - | * | * |
| TOTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES | 44 | 40 | 45 | 42 | 32 | 31 | 30 |
| Drugs/ Alcohol Issues/ Drink Driving | 2 | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Social Welfare System | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Social Apathy/ Lack of Values/ Lack of Empathy Toward Others/ Intolerance | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Breakdown of Family Unit/ Family Violence | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Child Abuse/ Lack of Care of Children/ Bringing up Children Wrongly | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Crime/ Law & Order | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Greed/ Materialism | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Racism/ Racial Tension | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Violence/ Gangs | * | * | 1 | * | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Youth Issues such as Behaviour/ Pregnancies/ Crime/ Drinking/ Drugs/ Lack of Discipline | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | * |
| TOTAL SOCIAL ISSUES | 13 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 13 | 15 | 12 |
| Climate Change/ Global Warming | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Environmental Issues/ Degradation | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Environmental Pollution/ Water Pollution | * | * | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| (Other) Natural Disasters/ Tsunamis/ Floods/ Volcanic Eruptions | 1 | - | * | 1 | * | - | 2 |
| Earthquakes & Quake Damage – Christchurch, South Island, Wellington etc. | - | * | * | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (INCLUDING CHRISTCHURCH) | 5 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 8 |
| Other | * | * | - | - | - | - | - |
| Can't say | 9 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 10 | 9 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Less than 1%.

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Roy Morgan New Zealand Electorate Profiles

Roy Morgan New Zealand provides the most in-depth analysis of each New Zealand electorate with our New Zealand Electorate profiles. Each electorate profile answers the key questions about the electorate. Who are the electors? What are they thinking? What media do they use? Who are they voting for? What are they doing? View a sample Roy Morgan New Zealand Electorate Profile [here](#).

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. The following table gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. The figures are approximate and for general guidance only, and assume a simple random sample. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

| Sample Size | Percentage Estimate | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | 40%-60% | 25% or 75% | 10% or 90% | 5% or 95% |
| 1,000 | ±3.2 | ±2.7 | ±1.9 | ±1.4 |